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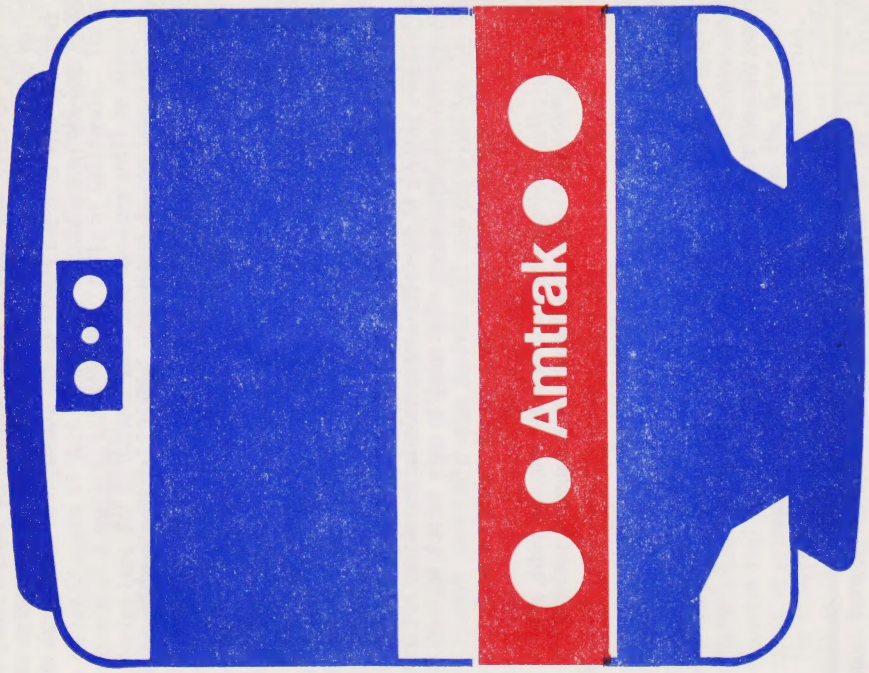
VOL. 8 NO. 2
SECOND ISSUE OF
JANUARY 1978
#168

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

Rec'd 2-25-78



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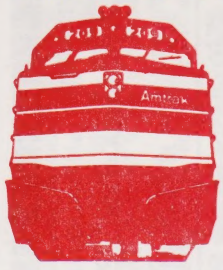
by Fred W. Frailey



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THE POWER

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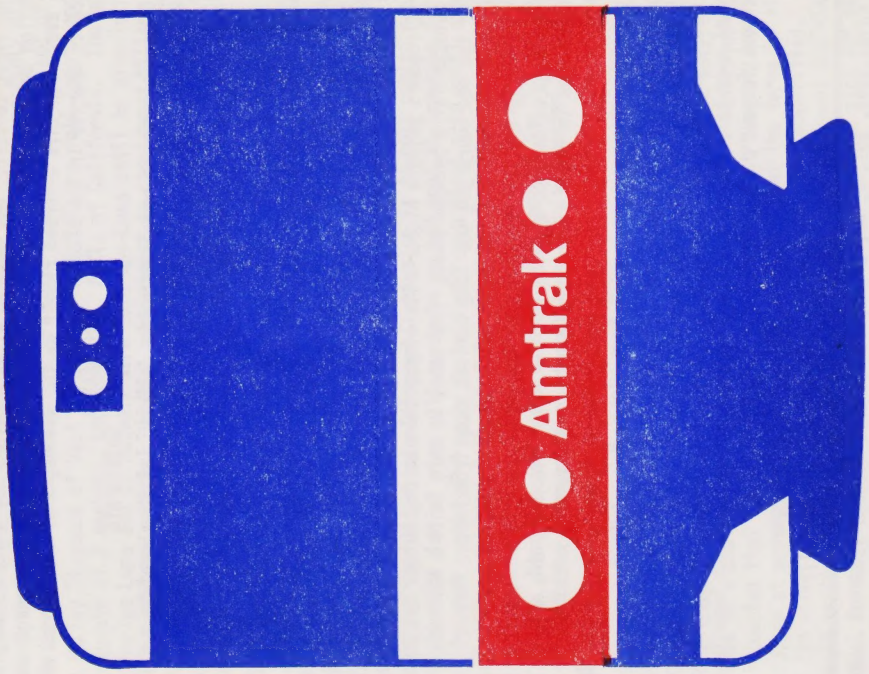

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(continued on page 17)

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TWO TRAINS THROUGH TEXAS
by Peter Putnam Bretz

It is December 1 at 1:45pm and I am at Chicago's Union Station. Discontinuance notices are up for the Conrail commuter trains to Valparaiso. A 2pm Burlington Northern train to Aurora leaves with all seven cars packed. Amtrak has posted its own notices pertaining to the FLORIDIAN, EMPIRE BUILDER, NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, LONE STAR, INTER-AMERICAN, etc. Yes, these are anxious days.

The sleeper "Angel Island" (ex-Great Western Tours, ex-IC) is going to Boston on the LAKE SHORE LIMITED. The "death trap" baggage car is on the rear of the train. (A porter told me that when the baggage car, with a locked and sealed door, is on the rear, there is no rear exit from the last car, since the vestibule is forward.)

I note also that the SOUTHWEST LIMITED got in 10 minutes early. Most trains are listed as on time. Unintelligible announcements come over the loudspeaker in the "great hall" waiting room. I dislike the Amtrak lounge's policy of not allowing baggage carts inside it.

Today I'm taking the LONE STAR. An Amtrak rep announces the train with a bullhorn, and the obediently waiting passengers behind a velvet rope now file onto the cold, blowing platform amid the ear-shattering roar of the F40PH's on adjacent tracks.

The first sleeper--going to Dallas--is my car: "Regal Vale", a 4-4-2 sold as a 10-6. I end up with Compartment H at roomette rates. Next in line is lounge 3391 (ex-Santa Fe), hi-level coaches 9959, 9920, 9918; diner "Silver Tureen" (late of DENVER ZEPHYR use); Houston sleeper "Palm Stream"; then baggage car and engines 534 and 524. Off we go and leave the land of snow and ice for the sunny Southwest.

At dinner I select the Top Sirloin, which is cooked and served indifferently. Loud calls echo from the kitchen and dishes clatter. And the diner was rough riding too. Quite a change from the quiet, subdued atmosphere and superb service offered on this same train back in 1974.

The lounge, however, had an excellent attendant, William Boyd. He was the only one on a trip around the system who offered table service in the lounge.

I fell asleep that night in a mellow mood. Unfortunately, the bed had an annoying vibration and bounce to it that made sleep difficult.

I was rudely awakened at Kansas City when yard crews tried to couple a mail car on behind the sleeper. CRASH! BANG! Then, YAAANK! A loud train radio crackled: "No good, try her again." BOOM! SMASH! TUUUGG. YANK!! SHOVE - SHOVE YANK!!

At Oklahoma City the next day a bright sun and bare ground greeted me, so I stepped onto the platform in my 4449 T-shirt...and froze. It was only 34 degrees!

At breakfast the poached egg on corned beef hash is not cooked properly and I send it back despite scowls from the waiter. It arrives again looking just as uncooked as before. At the next tabel a patron asks for a knife. He is shortly confronted by a crashing pile of twenty spoons deposited on his table. Doesn't Amtrak have any control over its personnel? On the other hand, the waiters are working under the handicap of having only two of them for the diner. I retreat to the lounge as quickly as possible, not leaving any tip. Now it's settle down to Mr. Boyd's light-years better service-with-a-smile.

Due to slow orders in the Red River area we arrive in Ft. Worth one hour late. Train 16 passes us just north of the station. Our train is split now, with the rear hi-level coach, lounge and sleeper going to Dallas along with our lead engine 524. The temperature is 70 degrees here today.

Since I have a first class ticket to Houston, I go into sleeper "Palm Stream", and south of Temple I am the

The LONE STAR loads at Chicago. Photo by Peter Bretz.

only occupant. Due to a 48-hour delay I had had around Chicago, I've had to scrap plans to ride the INTER-AMERICAN over the MKT trackage. I even overlook our meet with that train.

We make up time very easily, passing a freight train with an F-b engine still in silver passenger paint. I try again in the diner, and the food is better. The French onion soup comes with a small slice of garlic bread floating in it and cheese sprinkles. Very good. But the diner still rocks and rolls violently at times--seems the inside stabilizers are broken.

Arrival in Houston is 8:18pm, a little over 30 minutes late.

At 9:50pm engine 616 leads the SUNSET LIMITED into town, followed by engine 546, deadheading diner 8354, baggage 1070, hi-levels 9947, 9946, and 9927; lounge 3394, diner 8031, and 10-6 sleepers "Silver Butte", "Pacific Slope", and "Palm Leaf." No dome. No observation car.

I settle down in roomette 7 of the last car. Two panes of glass make for a nice clear view, and I am content. At 10:08pm we depart.

I get a comfortable sleep despite the plastic mattress. I enjoy the good SP roadbed, and French toast for breakfast. Most of the day I spend in the lounge car, making friends with a mother and her two Eskimo children, and another with her three brats. There is lots of running around under foot and some spilling of drinks, but it is fun--even when the little monsters just have to sit in my lap. Another guy turns out to be a semi-professional singer, and after a few drinks he bursts into song. We all join in, filling the car with out-of-tune and off-key musical enjoyment. Two railfans appear in the lounge, each with a guitar, and sing railroad songs. We all sing. In the repertoire is something they made up about the "Five Days of Amtrak", sung to the tune of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." Some people in the lounge car are heard to remark that they couldn't remember when they've had so much fun on a train trip.

Last night, business car "Tucson" was put on the rear, and all day the train runs at MoPac speeds (45-55mph on 80mph track). The pork loin for supper was expensive but super.

This last day was very relaxing--the way all train travel should be--easy, without any hassle. Even tho my roomette had a plastic mattress, it was cold enough outside that everything was fine.

Arrival in Los Angeles was 7:37am. And the porter did not roust us out early to insist that the bed had to be made up. As I waited in the aisle for baggage unloading, the door to bedroom A opened and a pajama-clad sleepy head asked "Where are we? -- Los Angeles? So soon? Oh, my!" And we were in 18 minutes early.

RTN READERS REACT
to the Haswell Plan for Amtrak

A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF COMMENTS RECEIVED SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE

About five days ago I received the last RTN, and I feel I have now recovered enough from reading the Haswell Plan so I can write to you.

To put it mildly, I was shocked. I have been a member of NARP almost from its inception, have met Tony Haswell a few times, and have always admired him for his dedication to rail passenger service. I simply cannot understand his proposals as published. For example, how can he justify cutting service on the PIONEER to restrict it between Salt Lake and Boise? My wife and I rode No. 25 Salt Lake to Seattle last October and found it very comfortable and well-patronized. And to emasculate the SUNSET LIMITED--one of Amtrak's most popular trains!

I could go on and on about the other proposals but I must be careful of my blood pressure. I am not going to send for the complete plan because I don't think I want to read it. I had felt that with Haswell on the Amtrak Board we might have hopes for expansion instead of contraction. There are at least two missing links in the Amtrak system that have long needed attention: New Orleans-Jacksonville and Boston-Portland-Augusta-Bangor, Maine. Neither of these appears in the proposal. It is all very, very sad.

Indiana Reader

Your summary of the Haswell Plan for Amtrak leaves me with pro and con feelings. I rather like his idea of seasonal trains, if it could support service on routes that might not otherwise exist. On the other hand, some routings make little sense, dead-ending in some places and zig-zagging more than the SFZ does.

Dennis Smith, Paradise, California

With many others, in Vermont and elsewhere, I was plain dismayed at reports of Haswell's ideas re Amtrak routes, with abandonment of the MONTREALER. While in its more hopeful days Amtrak had promised us a day train (presumably for Boston as well as NYC, it would also have gone to Montreal). To have only one train, a day train, terminate at St. Albans, would be a disaster. The overnight service to NYC and Wash. is part of its attraction. Service to the ski and recreation industry is another. Service to Dartmouth College and others is another. The Albany (D&H) route serves far less population, as Joe MacDonald put across when the MONTREALER was re-instituted. It is scenic, but does not serve the ski places or colleges the Vermont route does. And the ADIRONDACK route, tho shorter, must terminate at Grand Central Station--cannot provide direct service to Philadelphia, Washington and connections to all the rest of Amtrak. Transfer across New York City would discourage patronage.

John Sayward, Randolph, Vermont

What I think of the Plan could not be published in any magazine... The only thing I can say is that this isn't the "Tony" that we knew five years ago--talking about eliminating overnight trains because sleeping cars and dining cars are "too expensive." Since Haswell prepared this report at DOT's request, it is safe to say that what we are hearing is DOT and the Carter administration. They are talking thru Haswell as a speaker talks thru a microphone...

Maryland Reader

My first reaction was that possibly the map (last issue) was incorrect, that some lines had been left out in Texas, or that the artist did not understand the author's intentions. A closer look at the map and its explanation assured me that this absurdity, this monstrosity of a plan was correctly reflected in RTN.

I am at a total loss how a man like Haswell could possibly concoct such an absurd accumulation of suggestions. Has the man lost all his senses? Is this some kind of jest or practical joke that Haswell wants to play on the serious support-

ers of rail passenger service? I find this model of asininity and ludicrousness offensive enough to oppose it without reservation.

Texas Reader

Haswell's Plan is more of the same that we have been enduring for 7 years. Another case of Easterners deciding the course of action to be applied to other areas of the country about which they are totally uninformed. Such indiscretion has been the dominating characteristic of Amtrak's marketing efforts, wherein every potential rail passenger is nothing more than a commuter crammed into an 84-seat coach, munching a hamburger served in a cardboard box.

Their inability to recognize and sell rail travel as a highly desirable experience, an art developed to a high degree by the cruise ship industry, is an example of a strictured and stereotyped perspective. Haswell is applying the same shortsightedness to routing affairs. "The major market for long distance trains is tourists and vacationers who travel west in the summer and south in the winter." Indeed! Where has Tony been for the past 25 years?

It is way past time for routing determinations and other developments to be assumed and implemented by parties indigenous to the areas in question who know the markets and the potentials. Haswell's familiarity with railroading can render him valuable to the cause in many respects, but routing is not one of them. Best his talents be applied elsewhere.

M. D. Monaghan, Garland, Texas

Has Haswell lost his marbles?

California Reader

Mr. Haswell's concept of Florida train operation seems somewhat off the target. Apparently he sees it as a Northeast-Florida operation, with the intermediate areas from Richmond-Jacksonville as just ground to be covered in any way that's convenient. There is bound to be a loss of traffic in cutting the Columbia to Jacksonville part out, and operating two trains via Charleston much of the year won't help that. One route via Charleston would probably doom the level of traffic to a single train year-around.

> We apologize that the appearance of this issue of RTN has been delayed by our publication of the Haswell Plan (see ordering information on page 19). Demand for the Plan was much greater than we anticipated, and we increased our press run, so enough should be available for all. It did not delay work on our Yearbook, which will be published soon.

The elimination of the Winter Haven-Sebring-W. Palm Beach route isn't good either. The rational change there would be to eliminate Lakeland-Tampa-St. Pete and run the train Sanford-Orlando-Winter Haven-W. Palm Beach-Miami, with Lakeland and Tampa as bus connections. The FEC route for the other section is just fine.

Robert Clark, Sanford, Florida

Why does Mr. Haswell want to drop a lot of the NATIONAL LIMITED? We've had enough trouble just keeping it running thru Dayton. As we also know, when Amtrak flip-flopped the schedule, ridership doubled. Doesn't make much sense to me.

Bob Goldstein, Cincinnati, Ohio

Haswell is saving the bathwater and throwing out the baby in proposing elimination of the Boise-Portland segment of the PIONEER. Idaho is Pacific Nortwest-oriented as much as Utah, if not more. A reliable NW-Denver schedule is a real need. Spokane-Portland is another need that has been ignored too long.

Pete May, Goldendale, Washington

Haswell's dreams, I am afraid, will only result in nightmares for the nation's rail travelers. I must admit that a handful of his route plans do make sense. But as a whole his ideas will only dismantle what we have left of train service.

Minnesota Reader

I support the Haswell Plan to break several long-distance routes into two shorter day trains. If we cling blindly to sleeping car service in this age of

the airplane, we encourage deficits which jeopardize all rail service. The better plan is to retain just a few long-distance routes intact, and to use the more efficient day train to argue for increased numbers of trains.

Robert H. Rittle, Indiana, Pennsylvania

Anthony Haswell saves the passenger train again! He draws up a nationwide plan for the DOT that is a scheme to destroy long distance rail travel, replete with cost-ineffective, dangling appendages, and shows how to "go to hell in a day coach." He cuts out long hauls where patronage and revenues are high. He ignores the will of the people who have worked by the thousands for new service.

What is the result? A hue and cry goes up coast to coast as rail passenger advocates are awakened from their somnolence and their blood pressure hits record highs. Newspapers are notified, Congress and the DOT are flooded with letters and calls, and the 'Zero Base' report comes out outlining a truly nationwide rail passenger system.

I hope to the Good Lord above I am reading it right.

Charles Dunn, Miami, Florida

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The officially-adopted NARP route-map plan for Amtrak was shown in our First May, 1977 issue--issue no. 153, page 6. That plan kept the Amtrak map much as at present and added some routes.)

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

THIRD WASHINGTON METRO SEGMENT OPENS

by Ken Maylath

The third segment of Washington DC's Metro system opened for business on Monday, Feb 6, in the midst of a snowfall of several inches, after inaugural ceremonies and a day of free rides on the 3rd. It's actually an extension of the first short stretch that began operations almost 2 years ago from downtown Washington to Rhode Island Avenue--running parallel to the Chessie System trackage from Rhode Island to Silver Spring. It's also the first portion to serve Maryland. Maryland's acting governor Blair Lee was among those on hand for the Feb 3 ceremonies at Silver Spring. Free rides that day covered only a portion of the line, altho the trains ran thru in a simulation of regular operation.

There was a last-minute crisis involving insurance under Metro's agreement with Chessie, not resolved until the 3rd, when Metro put some of its construction money in escrow until coverage could be firmed up thru London. (Apparently one must go there to secure $25 million worth of protection.)

Initial operations were hampered slightly by the major snowstorm that hit the Middle Atlantic-New England area on the 6th and 7th--but Washington was spared the downpouring of snow that crippled transportation for days to the north. Some delays were reported the morning of the 7th due to frozen switches. No major problems were reported during the first week of operation. Media coverage of the storm reduced the amount of attention given Metro, especially after the publicity surrounding the Friday morning ceremonies. Bus routes were not changed, but a number are scheduled for reorientation shortly.

Next on the list of lines to open is New Carrollton, which will terminate in the area of Amtrak's Capital Beltway station--hopefully this summer. This line is intended to provide an easy transfer to Amtrak there, in similar fashion to the BART-Amtrak transfer at Richmond, California.

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RUMOR HAS IT that the Southern Pacific will unveil a new plan for avoiding public interference in its San Francisco commute line: drop weekend service and buy some new equipment, and keep weekday service only.

(continued on page 15)

Mixed Train of Thoughts

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION Brock Adams blasted Amtrak in an interview with New York Times reporters in mid-February. They reported that he sounded "nearly as hostile" toward Amtrak as his predecessor, William Coleman. Adams told them he is not at all satisfied with Amtrak, that he wants the rail corporation to reduce its requests for subsidies. He said his view of Amtrak is his personal one and "not yet" that of the administration. He said, however, that he still favors a national network of rail passenger lines that would be useful when energy becomes scarcer..... SIX SAN DIEGAN roundtrips daily--that's what Amtrak is now running, effective Feb 14, after startup of the "El Camino" service that was the brainchild of L.A. County Supervisor Baxter Ward. Governor Brown rode the first (northbound) train from San Juan Capistrano to Los Angeles, and Senator Mills, Transportation Director Adriana Gianturco, and Baxter Ward rode the full route from San Diego. We'll have a full report by Peter Bretz next issue.....

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THE REROUTING OF the FLORIDIAN is expected to occur Apr 30. Amtrak's Board, probably meeting next on Mar 1, will decide whether the train should run via Birmingham or Chattanooga. The major rerouting is via Atlanta, and Amtrak intends to run via Chattanooga also, but may not at first, because of rail problems on the Chattanooga-Atlanta line--heavy freight tonnage Carterville-Atlanta, and poor track condition. When the Chattanooga rerouting occurs, it will run via Murfreesboro, Tullahoma, Chattanooga, Carterville GA, Marietta GA. South of Atlanta it will run via Hapeville GA, Griffin, Macon, Millen, Savannah, etc. No schedules have been worked out yet. If it initially runs via Birmingham (as now), it will run nonstop between that city and Atlanta. The above information has been given to Congress by Amtrak, but not yet officially released to the public.....

THE PALMETTO DERAILED between Washington and Capital Beltway Station at 7:18pm Feb 15. The train, with one E60 GE electric locomotive and 9 Amfleet cars, derailed at 70mph but remained upright and in line. The entire train, including baggage car and 8 passenger cars, left the tracks, injuring 21 people. Only two of the injured were retained in a hospital overnight, however. There was about $12,000 damage to the wheels and trucks of each car. The cause of the derailment was not immediately known. It blocked the mainline until late on the 16th, tho one track was opened at 10:40am on the 16th, after passengers were bused around it...

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THE AMFLEETING OF the MONTREALER has not yet occurred, but Amtrak's target date for this is now Feb 27 (northbound) and Feb 28 (southbound), altho those times could be delayed further. Amtrak said that one or two sleepers will run in each Amfleet consist..... AMTRAK'S NATIONAL TIMETABLE for Jan 8 was distributed about a month late. This issue, in black and blue ink on white paper, may reflect Amtrak's feeling bruised by recent events..... DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: in our last issue we gave the mileage between Montreal and St. Albans VT as 111. But that's kilometers; the actual miles are only 69. Glenn Lee sends a correction for his PIONEER article in the 2nd Dec issue: the Pendleton UP station waiting room IS open to the public, and the UP agent on duty there will obtain train-delay information for travelers. It is the Hinkle OR depot which has no waiting facilities, with the old waiting room now taken for communication equipment. Hinkle also has no glass-box shelter, and passengers DO have to wait under the eaves of the building..... SOUTHERN RAILWAY'S JOINING of Amtrak will not occur until after the DOT "zero-base" report appears, according to a late report...

TRAINS IN THE MEDIA: The Wall Street Journal's lead article on Feb 16 was a writeup of Amtrak riding by June Kronholz--a rather negative article and rather pointless. The Feb Reader's Digest gives a 4-page story of old-time train riding in Michigan, from Bruce Catton's 1972 book "Waiting for the Morning Train." Articles like this leave us with mixed feelings. It has pleasant nostalgia, but leaves one with the notion that train travel (especially sleeping car travel) is a thing of the past. The San Francisco Chronicle on Feb 9 carried a highly favorable article on the COAST STARLIGHT by Carl Nolte. The picture you get is that it's largely patronized by young people, especially college students. Quote from a young woman making her first train trip: "It's cool. It's an adventure. It's a time warp, you know?" The Sacramento Bee carried a long and highly laudatory description of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR by Dick Tracy. Such articles are great advertising for Amtrak at a time when its advertising budget is very low.....

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SPEAKING OF ADVERTISING, the "negative advertising" that Amtrak had to do last fall appears to have had the effect of reducing train ridership. The announcements of all the impending cutbacks, and the train discontinuance notices posted in stations and on trains must have cost the corporation untold revenue--the message coming across was "The trains are being cut back; we don't want you." The latest figures released show that Amtrak systemwide ridership dropped in Oct and Nov, compared to the previous year. The drops were 5% and 3% respectively. Ridership increases in previous months were high enough that the figures for the first 11 months of 1977 as a whole indicated a 3% rise. But that rise would have been greater without the necessity of going thru the discontinuance threats. An Amtrak spokesman denied that these threats hurt business, and said that it was because Amtrak's advertising budget has been cut almost to nothing by its money crises. That cut contributes too. The administration's slicing of Amtrak's budget causes a double whammy: reduce positive advertising, and go into negative advertising..... MANY RAIL OBSERVERS are furious that the DOT is insisting on using 1977 ridership figures as a basis for making up its "zero-base" route plan. Remember that 1977 long distance ridership figures were adversely affected by the winter problems of early 1977 and especially by the SDP40F engine fiasco.....

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A RAILROAD THEME will appear on a new postage stamp due out May 24 (Paul Reistrup's birthday!). The stamp honors Jimmie Rodgers, the "Singing Brakeman" who became the nation's number one recording star in the late 1920's. A model steam engine appears in the background of the stamp design.....

A SPECIAL TRAIN consisting of Amtrak SDP #537, dorm lounge 3394 and sleeper 2266 "Placid Sea" ran overnight from Los Angeles to Oakland carrying Mr. Ed Dailey, president of World Airways, a charter outfit, and his 6 guests, along with a full Amtrak crew and an Amtrak official. Dailey's plane was fogged in at Santa Barbara, and he called Amtrak in the afternoon to arrange the special, which was put together in probably record time. The party boarded at Santa Barbara at 1:30am on Feb 6. The item was noted in Herb Caen's column as an example of what can be done if you have money.....

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FULL FLORIDA SERVICE is expectedto be restored on Feb 26, with trains 83-84, the SILVER METEOR, and 85-86, the CHAMPION, running separately, in addition to 81-82, the SILVER STAR..... THE STARTUP DATE for the overnight Sacramento to San Diego train, nos. 12 & 13, is expected to be Apr 30. Amtrak said no name has yet been chosen for the train, but some Eastern sources are calling it the CALIFORNIAN.....

THE EASTERN PART of the nation was hit in February by a series of heavy snowstorms that paralyzed much of the Northeast. The first of these hit on Feb 6. News coverage of the storms' effects was widespread, and it was noted that transportation--cars, plane and buses--was wiped out in many places. What the media almost universally failed to note was that trains generally continued to run, altho they frequently were delayed. Amtrak's major problem was with the Metroliners. They are badly affected by blowing snow, and for two days half of them were cancelled. Metroliners during the storm were running with about 1-hour delays, and conventional (Amfleet) trains with ½-hour delays. The power was out in the Boston area for a time starting at 3am Feb 14. This fouled up switches in Boston, and for 5½ hours no trains could operate. Locomotives were then used to pump air to keep switches open. Many train employees who reported for work on Feb 6 never got home until 3 or 4 days later. For 2 days at the height of the early Feb storm trains were the only transportation to Boston and Providence--with 28 inches of snow falling. The snow on the East Coast was heavier than last year's severe winter, but temperatures were not so low. Amtrak was deluged with "thousands" of unexpected riders. Trains made stops in unusual spots to pick up stranded motorists. The Providence Amtrak station became a haven for about 400 people who could not get around the city. A bridegroom found himself marooned in a Boston hotel, and Amtrak put him on the LAKE SHORE LIMITED to rush him to Chicago where his bride waited at the altar, for a Feb 11 wedding. A special civil defense train was run by Amtrak Providence-Worcester Feb 10 to assist in the storm disaster.....

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A FLORIDA READER on Feb 8 wrote us, enclosing a news clipping showing hundreds of travelers stranded at airports: "Here's a good illustration of what goes on in the minds of the news media people, and thus the public, regarding public transportation. It was repeatedly stated in newspaper reports and on radio and TV that EVERYONE is stranded because the planes can't fly to the Northeast. No mention was made anywhere, except in Auto-Train's regular TV ads, that rail service existed. The northbound trains continued to run, but only a few people boarded the SILVER STAR last night at Orlando--10 or less. It had a 13-car consist, of which 8 were revenue coaches and sleepers, with probably 100-150 aboard. We should write to newspapers and TV stations and to Amtrak and demand some coverage of the fact that Amtrak exists"..... WITH ROADS IMPASSABLE and airports closed, a special train saved the life of a 17-year old youth when it carried him from Utica KY to Nashville on Jan 17 for treatment of heart convulsions. The special train was a freight engine and a caboose on the L&N, preceded by a pilot hi-rail. The train was designated Extra 430 South. The NY Times reported in late January about an airline passenger trying to get from Sacramento to Charleston. His plane was diverted to Dallas and his luggage lost there. He finally got to his destination a day late by relying on Amtrak..... DRIVING WAS PROHIBITED in Boston as record snows piled up, and the city relied on public transportation. By chance, on Feb 5, the day before the big storm, the Boston Globe ran a large page-one article comparing car commuting with public transit. Said a Boston reader: "It was the kind of publicity the MBTA needs, and the timing could not have been better. The storm seems to have caused a lot of people to question the degree to which we use private cars. If the planners play their cards right, some very good things could come out of this blizzard. I am looking forward to the next snow emergency; this one has really been a lot of fun"..... THE NORTHBOUND MONTREALER was nearly 10 hours late in Vermont on Feb 7, so a CN VIA special train ran that night, leaving Montreal at 6:10pm to meet the late MONTREALER at Cantic or St. Albans, and transferred southbound passengers from the CN train to the Amtrak train. Consist of the CN train was VIA engine 6537 (FP9A), and VIA coaches 5394 and 5573.....

VERY HEAVY SNOWS have been hitting Western Europe as well. On Jan 22 150 passengers stuck in a train in a snowdrift for 17 hours near Prevencheres in Southern France were rescued.....

IN THE MIDWEST, during the Jan 26-27 blizzard Amtrak Turboliners between Milwaukee and Chicago used Milwaukee Road and Amtrak diesel locomotives ahead of the lead power car to plow snow, the theory being that a diesel pilot is stronger than the Turbo's nose and windshield..... SOUTH SHORE LINE officials in Chicago announced that starting Feb 8 commuter train runs would be reduced by two-thirds because of equipment failures caused by the snow and cold. The devastating storm that hit Toronto and southern Ontario Jan 26 produced the lowest barometer reading in 138 years. The storm saw all public transportation halted except trains. Papers reported passenger trains on time between Toronto and London, the heart of the storm area. As high winds hit the city, the London, Ont. transit system ordered all buses off the streets. The NY Times noted on page one on Feb 18 that the Long Island Rail Road suffered many more storm problems than other commuter lines. Union leaders have charged that the reason was that the LIRR didn't bring in more workers in advance and keep them on overtime. Philadelphia's system said it uses linen filters over electric engine intakes to keep snow out, and the LIRR doesn't do that. The LIRR was shut down by the Feb 6 storm..... A FEBRUARY 12 report from Seattle said that no Greyhound buses from Chicago had gotten thru in 4 days. Amtrak trains on the same route were getting thru, but running several hours late. Amtrak was the only ground transportation making it. CP's CANADIAN arrived in Calgary from the east 15 hours late, due to a blizzard in Saskatchewan. The engines failed, snow plows were stuck, and a freight derailed ahead of it. Bus and air travel was halted or delayed..... CONRAIL'S NEW HAVEN commuter line had to reduce service on Feb 2because of the nationwide coal strike--generating plants were running low on the fuel....

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OUT IN CALIFORNIA, heavy rains hit Southern California the night of Feb 9--the most damaging storm of this century. COAST STARLIGHT operations between L.A. and Oakland were disrupted by a washed-out bridge on the SP line at Moorpark and mud slides between Surf and Gaviota. There was much busing and flying of passengers. The train was annulled between L.A. and Oakland Feb 10 and again Feb 21. Most SP lines into L.A. were blocked in the storm..... NEW CALIFORNIA LAW has abolished the State Highway Commission, Calif. Toll Bridge Authority, State Aeronautics Board, and State Transportation Board, and substituted an 11-member State Transportation Commission which Gov. Brown says "may change California's lifestyle." On Feb 17 Brown named industrialist Norton Simon and 8 others to the Commission..... THE AMSLEEPER PROJECT: Amtrak is said to be considering converting some 60-seat Amcoaches into Amsleepers. Amtrak would remove the two dressing rooms and replace them with two roomettes to satisfy the ICC rule that requires sleeping car service on overnight trains. These cars could turn up on the INTER-AMERICAN and SHENANDOAH, while converted 10-6 sleepers would be used on the NIGHT OWL, PANAMA LIMITED, PIONEER, and "CALIFORNIAN". The 25 Pacific-series sleepers that were converted to all-electric power are being called "Pacific Electrics" by some railfans. Those cars have been renumbered in the 2900-series.....

THE MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION of RR Passengers has submitted a rail passenger service plan for Minnesota to that state's DOT. Copies are available for 75¢ postpaid from MinnARP, PO Box 375, Minneapolis MN 55440..... EXPERIMENTAL BUS SERVICE Stockton-Sacramento joining the SAN JOAQUIN, funded by state of California, was discontinued early in Jan. Amtrak said Feb 21 that it will re-establish it Apr 30 with a regular Greyhound run for economy. Starting Feb 22, the Greyhound connection from L.A. to the SAN JOAQUIN will leave at 8:30am so riders from the new "El Camino" SAN DIEGAN can catch it..... TWENTIETH CENTURY LIMITED lives: a new Broadway musical, "On the Twentieth Century", opened in New York Feb 19.....

THE DU PONT COMPANY advertises a "new clear plastic sheet with unexcelled abrasion resistance." Called Lucite SAR, it could be a substitute for Lexan?.....

GRAND CANYON RAILROAD Inc., a Phoenix firm, is buying the 64-mile line from Williams AZ to Grand Canyon Village from Santa Fe to run steam trains.....

News in this issue is updated thru Feb 21 p.m..

TAKING A CHANCE ON THE FRAMINGHAM LOCAL
by Robert Underwood

The first of the Blizzards of '78 struck the East Coast on Monday, Feb 6. A week later, Boston and other cities are still digging out. With driving banned in Boston, people are walking down the middle of the street. Public transportation is taxed to the limit and then some.

At 1:30pm at South Station I inquire about the 2pm passenger extra to Framingham. "Well, we're not sure if it will run." I bought a round trip ticket anyway. Passengers are still waiting for the 1:45 Needham Local at 2:15, and they're still not sure about Framingham. At 2:20 the Budd car for Needham is boarding.

At 2:35 we board a 6-car train on track 9. Consist is Amtrak RS3 #138 (acquired from Conrail in 1976), CN steam generator car, and green, green, purple, green, purple, orange ex-New Haven coaches trailed by B&M geep #1741. I settle down in the second head coach and proceed to eat lunch and catch up on my notes. It's now 3:05 and we're still sitting. Three commuters near me are joking: "At 3:30 we abandon ship." They laugh about the station announcement which went something like: "Anyone who wants to take a chance on the Framingham Local, it's boarding on Track 9." Some people are abandoning the train.

These once-fine cars have seen better days. Some of the reclining seats won't recline, while others recline and won't come back up.

The conductor makes an announcement at 3:30: "Uh, we're having trouble with the engine and we're trying to find a new one." Soon Amtrak RS3 #105 is coupled on, brakes tested and all is in order. At 3:37 we get underway. S-l-o-w-l-y. Then screech, stop. Well, we made it to the end of the platform.

Amtrak's LAKE SHORE LIMITED departs on time at 3:40. We'll follow him. At 3:52 we're still sitting. D&H PA #19 is idling outside my window. At 3:58 the RS3 revs up and here we go. Into the yards. Screech, stop. Rev, screech, stop. Now we're alongside PA #16. Announcement: "Stop signal up ahead. We have to phone the dispatcher for permission to go by. The Amtrak train just left." Looks like number 449 got off to a bad start too.

The weather is beautiful, with bright sun, little wind, and the temperature near freezing. It's a great day to photograph train activity, and that I'm doing from the vestibule. There's another PA backing out of the yards with a string of ex-NH stainless steel cars with different-colored window bands.

At 4pm the Amtrak train for New York City is leaving. And now one is arriving. Thirty seconds later an Amfleet train is backing in. There is much whistle-blowing. "Well, I guess that means 'abandon ship'" the commuters joke. At 4:10 we're still here. There goes a 3-car geep-hauled job, and is it packed! Even the vestibules are jammed. From the radio I learned that MBTA's lines were carrying a quarter of a million people or more. Earlier I had had to pass up four jammed trolleys before I could get on one at Arlington headed for Park Street.

4:14: Here we go! Ssheech, stop. At 4:18, the Alco is revving like crazy and we're really moving. By 4:21 we made it to Back Bay. We leave Back Bay at 4:25, after loading several carloads of passengers.

Newton. West Newton. Auburndale. We're moving right along. Oh, oh. Slowing by Riverside. Screech, stop. Red over red over red. Soon it is announced that we have to wait for a freight. At 5:10 along comes a long eastbound piggyback.

At 5:13, here we go again. Whoosh, screech, jolt. The brakes went into emergency. One woman asked, "Did we derail?" I hear the air coming back. Here we go at 5:18. We had stopped right in the middle of the interlocking at CP11.

Underway again. That was to be the last delay. The conductor came in and told us that the train had to be stopped in emergency because some fool had tried to jump ON. By now it was quite dark, and my hopes for some good photos at Framingham had dimmed. Without a tripod I was stuck. Natick came at 5:40. This, and Wellesley just before it, seemed to be the heaviest stops.

The platform shed at Natick is quite a distance back from the tracks, and the lights illuminated the piles of snow three and four feet deep. It was pitch dark outside now, and each time we stopped, the car was plunged into inky blackness. Batteries, if we even had them, were shot.

We finally made it to Framingham at 5:52--only 3hrs, 6mins late. I detrained onto an icy, slippery platform. It was also pitch dark there. No lights on the platform or in the station. The train pulled up to clear the crossing and stopped. I got on the head coach to ride back to South Station. We didn't leave immediately, tho. First we ran west and crossed over to Track 1, the westbound track. All commuter stations on this line have platforms only on the eastbound track, with the exception of Framingham.

The B&M geep did lots of revving, and after several false starts we finally left at 6:40. People on the platform were waiting for the arrival of the regular trains from Boston. One fellow was particularly upset when he learned that we were the 2pm departure from Boston.

I enjoyed the ride in the dark, as I could see thru the relatively clear Lexan. At 6:48 we passed a long outbound train which had two dark cars among the six or so on the train. We stopped at 6:53 and the engineer came thru. "Somethin' just ain't right. I think the brakes are grabbing." Soon came the loud whoosh as the air was dumped and the creaks and groans as the air was pumped back up. The engineer returned to the lead unit and revved it up.

We finally arrived back in South Station at 7:40. We were due there at 3:46. A mob of passengers on the platform were shouting "Hooray! It's about time! Long wait." We had only passed one other train, so long waits were the rule this day.

I was still in the station when the announcement came: "The 8:05 train to Needham has been cancelled. The next train will be at 9:45." Meanwhile, everyone had boarded the "jinxed" train to Framingham, and all I could say was "Lots of luck."

CARS & CONSISTS

*SUNSET LIMITED, train 2, with extra cars to Mardi Gras festival, leaving L.A. Jan 31: engines 546, 531 (SDP's); cars 1232 baggage, coaches 4869, 4858, 4886; dorm-lounge 3390, diner 8030; sleepers 2220 "Indian Squaw", 2627 "Pacific Range", 2761 "Palm Tower", 2508 "Blue Water", 2214 "Indian Lake", 2211 "Indian Drum", 2640 "Pacific View"; diner 8034; sleepers 2204 "Silver Pelican", 2212 "Indian Falls", SR 2006 "Ocmulgee River", dome-slpr-obs 9250 "Silver Horizon". Returned to L.A. Feb 10 with consist: engines 531, 546; cars 1197, 4869, 4858, 4886, 3395, 8035, 2252 "Star Leaf", 2761 "Palm Tower", 2640 "Pacific View", 2214 "Indian Lake", 2211 "Indian Drum", 2501 "Blue Grove", 8034, 2204 "Silver Pelican", 2212 "Indian Falls", SR 2017 "Tiger River", 9251 "Silver Penthouse".

*Chicago Medical Equipment Company's private car "Silver Foot" is to receive extensive repairs at ICG Woodcrest Shop to make car self-contained. This is ex-UP sleeper-lounge "Redwood", ex-Great Western Tours.

*Recently-sold Amtrak cars 6403, 5472, and 7255 were seen on Rock Island Jan 7 morning, deadheading on rear of westbound freight on St. Louis-Kansas City line.

*NATIONAL LIMITED train 31 due Kansas City Jan 24 was annulled: mainline blocked by Conrail derailment at Trinway OH. No. 31 backed to Pittsburgh & psgrs bused to K.C. Makeup consist No. 30, K.C. Jan 25: engine 604 (E unit); cars 1037 (bag from Dallas), 1004 (bag from L.A.), coach 5655. Food service provided in coach.

*Cars to be rebuilt for LAKE SHORE LTD: 6 bag-dorms of 1400-series; 27 coaches, #4554-4582; 6 lounges of 3400-series; 5 diners of 8050-9 series; 4 slumbercoaches; 8 2600-series 10-6 sleepers.

*EL REGIOMONTANO, NdeM train 71, Mexico City Jan 23: engines 9404, 9200; cars 2608 (express), 599 "Presa Guadalupe", 564 "Bolivia", diner 3610 "Tarasco", 566 "Canada", 343 "Belgica", 500 "Grecia", obs-lounge 354 "Club Cuitlahuac".

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT (continued from page 8)

THE FREE TRANSIT SYSTEM

Transportation Secretary Brock Adams told the National Press Club on Feb 8 that improving public transit is a major part of President Carter's goal of energy conservation--cutting gasoline usage by 12 billion gallons yearly by 1985. To help public transit, Adams said that the DOT plans to find a "major city" in which to test a fare-free transit system, and that the DOT will "back it 100% for awhile to see if it really works." Talks are in the preliminary stages with many cities, a DOT spokeswoman said, but no other details are available yet. The free-fare experiment would be in effect only in off-peak hours.

The Wall Street Journal (Feb 13) editorialized against the idea: "It seems that in terms of cost and utility, the automobile is a far more efficient means of transportation than the rail car for most people in most places."

RTN's editor and thousands of Bay Area residents had an opportunity to try a fare-free system on Feb 2, when BART without fanfare declared a day of no fares--at all hours. About 200,000 riders--twice the normal number--rode the system, and BART expected to lose $100,000 in fares, but the public relations effort was undoubtedly worth it. Many riders were first-time users, and many said they would become regular users after the experience. A week earlier BART said that it would offer a fare-free day after the AC Transit strike ended as a goodwill gesture to the commuters who tolerated crowded trains and breakdowns during the overload the bus strike had brought on.

A chilly fog was settling in around the Concord station at 9:30pm as we boarded a train back to Berkeley. The train was just about completely full, with a great many of the riders clearly "joy-riders". Earlier, at rush hour, we saw more standees than we'd seen since opening day ceremonies. The fare-free day went operationally very smoothly.

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A REFERENDUM VOTE on Mar 7 in the Miami area could decide whether the proposed rail rapid transit system for Dade County will be built.

TROLLEY AND BUS collided in Pittsburgh the morning of Feb 10, killing 4 and injuring 26. One of the dead was the driver of the Port Authority bus in the head-on collision with an outbound trolley.

A FINAL DECISION is expected by Mar 1 on four alternatives to building the entire Washington DC Metro system.

THE ICG COLLISION in Chicago on Jan 26 wascaused by iced-up brakes improperly designed to withstand severe wintertime operation, the UTU has claimed. A group of ICG engineers has called for a federal investigation of the Highliner brakes.

RAIL CANADA

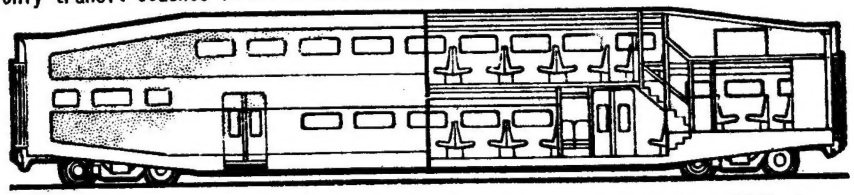
RTN HAS LEARNED from a reliable source that VIA Rail Canada is making a number of plans for service changes that are not being publicized. These include: (1) discontinuing the Winnipeg-Edmonton-Vancouver route on CN, leaving Jasper without service and presumably leaving Prince Rupert high and dry; (2) adopting CP-level fares within the next two years; (3) discontinuing the ATLANTIC LIMITED Montreal-Saint John; (4) discontinuing train service to Gaspé; (5) operating LRC trains on the Winnipeg-Saskatoon route. No timetable is given for these changes, but VIA calculates that it will be able to scrap 250 passenger cars by Nov. 1980 by implementing these plans.

ESQUIMALT AND NANAIMO report of last issue did not make clear that the resumption of service last Dec 19 was for the leg between Courtenay and Parksville; the Victoria-Parksville section had been running. Discontinuance of the entire train has been delayed until after next Jun 30.

BOMBARDIER-MLW LTD. of Montreal signed a contract Jan 13 with VIA Rail Canada to build 22 new locomotives and 50 LRC coaches for delivery in 1980. The equip-

ment will be assigned to Montreal-Ottawa and Montreal-Quebec runs. Total price is $60 million.

THOSE UNUSUALLY-SHAPED double-decker GO Transit coaches are apparently the only transit coaches in North America with two complete levels. The cars hold 162



passengers each and were expected to begin operation on the Lakeshore GO Train line by the end of February.

A NATIONAL CONFERENCE on rail passenger service was organized by Transport Minister Otto Lang's office for the week of Jan 29, with Lang and VIA Rail boss Frank Roberts to appear in a panel discussion of the shape of the future rail passenger network in Canada. Representatives from local consumer groups were invited to attend the hastily-called meeting. The conference was deflated by the same-day resignation of Solicitor-General Francis Fox, who reportedly admitted forging the name of his lover's husband to hospital papers for an abortion of what might have been Fox's child. This event wiped out coverage by the Ottawa press corps, and also kept Lang away at cabinet meetings most of the day. Frank Roberts of VIA did expound on his plans. It came out at the meeting that the Ministry of Transport (Transport Canada) will contract to VIA on selected routes and stipulate service levels. VIA will look after equipment selection and operations for most "economic" operations in line with MOT service requirements. The CTC will continue to rule on service abandonments. Thus Transport Canada determines what services will be run, rather than VIA.

EDMONTON'S LRT LINE is expected to begin revenue service on Apr 23.

RAIL PASSENGER RIDERSHIP in 1977 was about 10% higher than in 1976 in Canada.

SONGS OF THE AMTRAK

Here's the Amtrak Christmas song **Pete Bretz** heard on the SUNSET (see p. 5):

On the first day of Amtrak, **John Volpe gave to me**: a broken-down Rock Island RDC.
On the second day of Amtrak, **John Volpe gave to me**: two baggage-dorms and a broken-down Rock Island RDC.
On the third day of Amtrak, **John Volpe gave to me**: three troop sleepers, two baggage-dorms, and a broken-down Rock Island RDC.
On the fourth day of Amtrak, John Volpe gave to me: four automat cars, three troop sleepers, two baggage-dorms, and a broken-down Rock Island RDC.
On the fifth day of Amtrak, John Volpe gave to me: five Golden Rockets (consisting of:) four automat cars, three troop sleepers, two baggage-dorms, and a broken-down Rock Island RDC.

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Amtrak is running a new TV-radio ad with the following lyrics:

We've been working on the railroad
Every Amtrak day
Making travel nice 'n' easy
All across the U.S.A.
Amtrak gives you super service
And can save you lots of dough
So take the train and ride in comfort
The Amtrak way to go.

LETTERS (continued from page 2)

I hope other RTN readers enjoy Mr. Lee's articles as much as I do--the breadth of his knowledge, along with the witty asides and insight with which he colors his articles make him my favorite RTN contributor. Let's have more Glenn Lee.

His excellent article on the EMPIRE BUILDER (last issue) brings up an interesting point. Why is it that Canadian and European railway systems survive in adverse weather conditions (often far worse than those which continuously disabled and hampered Mr. Lee's train) much more successfully than American railroads? In these foreign lands do the first snowflakes mean frozen steam lines, disabled signal systems, massive washouts, broken (frozen) rails, ad infinitum as they do on our railroads? Somehow I think not.

James E. Cane
San Francisco, California

Glenn Lee is one of your better writers and it is generally a joy to read an article by him. However, in the EMPIRE BUILDER story I believe he was a bit unfair: BN operates the trains, not Amtrak. Therefore, any reference to Amtrak in regard to train movements is in error. Since BN operates the trains, they are responsible for lateness. But was BN at fault? Mr. Lee over and over explained the lateness--bad weather, broken rails, a detour over the Milw (which adds up to 2 hours to the run, but certainly is not BN's fault, since their line is flooded out). Mr. Lee explained about the heavy snow--that cars were barely moving or were stuck behind snowdrifts. He twice said the buses were not running. Yet thru all of this he got to Seattle--late, yes, but he did get thru. The ride he got was no worse nor better than the Northern Pacific would have given the NCL under the same conditions. He should have been happy to be able to get thru to his destination rather than make statements about the worst ride ever.

H. Martin Swan
St. Paul, Minnesota

I'm rather disappointed in Glenn Lee's lack of imagination. Doesn't he know that those strobe lights on the Amtrak engines are really nothing more than the pantograph of a bipolar arcing on an icy wire on a frosty January night from the Super Dome of the OLYMPIAN HIAWATHA?

Arthur C. Cox
Evanston, Illinois

Glad to read about the potential rebuilding of LAKE SHORE LIMITED equipment. I've been worried that we would get another Amfleet Special--microwave (bleep) food, porthole windows. With the Amfleet INTER-AMERICAN I now fly or drive to see my sister in Little Rock. I'm not paying for it. I applaud all efforts to stop Amfleet takeover of overnight runs. Amfleet belongs in the East. At least Turbos have large windows for daytime runs.

F. R. Hawath
Owosso, Michigan

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"I am shocked to find Mr. Haswell suggesting dropping long distance trains because travel by other modes is improving. What would happen if a restaurant told its customers it will no longer serve food because intravenous injections of glucose are a more efficient alternative?"

--James Russell in Introduction to "The Haswell Plan for Amtrak.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"GO transit system will use doubledecker buses.

TORONTO (CP)--Double-decker coaches are expected to be operating on the Lakeshore line of the GO train system by the end of February..."

--St. Catharines (Ont.) Standard, Jan 26.

(That headline writer needs some coaching.)

Express Ads

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, Pullman, stationery, rules, metal items from 25 railroads. Long stamped envelope for list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. (Will buy large and small railroad collections.)

RTN READERS: SUPPORT YOUR FRIENDLY ADVERTISERS! Courteous, competent help in securing the best available accommodations on Amtrak, CN, CP, Princess Patricia, etc. Write GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., Suite 900, San Francisco 94105, or call us at (415) 398-2994. Pay by check or credit card--we make it easy!

If Amtrak and the DOT expect their "zero-based" system to be a credible one, then the HILLTOPPER and SHENANDOAH had better not be a part of it. Remember, fellows, population not politics. W. H. Snorteland, Ohio A.R.P.

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY: 12" LP record features famous tripleheader **steam excursion**, CPR May 1, 1960. As realistic as standing beside the engineer! **$5.95 + 50¢ post**age & handling ($1 US). Railfans Unlimited, Box 8, Stn.D, Toronto, **Ont. Canada.**

1978 TURBOLINER CALENDAR with full-color photo printed on heavy **white card stock.** Handy 9x12 size with whole year at a glance. Each $1 donation brings you a calendar by 1st class mail. OHIO ASS'N OF R.R. PASSENGERS, BOX 653, XENIA, OH 45385. Send business SASE for membership information, sample copy of "The 6:53".

Apr 1 1978: Boston-Portland ME: First loco-hauled excursion (Alco PA's requested) in 18 years to Portland. Runbys and railfan amenities. $29.95 before March 1. Mass. Bay Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc., Dept N, Ward Hill MA 01830.

CLINCHFIELD'S OLD NO. 5, by H. Reid. Full story of 4-6-0's reconditioning and use in excursion service. Published 1972, 32 pages, 35 photographs, paperbound. $2.75 postpaid. Old Dominion Chapter, NRHS; P. O. Box 8583; Richmond, VA 23226.

NEW lower USA rail pass 14 days $159, 21 days $215, 30 days $255 through May 15. Many other off-peak excursion fares available. Climb aboard your favorite train now, before it's discontinued or replaced by new equipment. Ask the rail specialists since 1952. Let's Travel Tours, 3780 Elizabeth St, Riverside CA 92516. (714) 787-8350.

Railroad buttons ideal for blazers, shirts, sweaters, uniforms, etc. Send $1.00 for sample and list. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

RAILROADIANA: Send large SASE for list of Locks, Lanterns, China, Linen paper, to G. Cowley, 4637 N. Wolcott, Chicago IL 60640.

HASWELL'S PLAN: is certainly a worthy plan deserving thoughtful consideration, however there is a serious error on the Chicago - New Orleans route (PANAMA LIMITED). If the route is to be dissected, the most logical and economically feasible division point would be Memphis, Tennessee vice Jackson, Mississippi. Using the present AMTRAK schedule, the run from Jackson to Chicago would take 15 hours, 22 minutes, thus negating the "day train" rationale. With Memphis as the division point, Chicago to Memphis would take 10 hours, 40 minutes, with the Memphis-Jackson-New Orleans trip taking 7 hours, 40 minutes. This route would give truly "day train" service in both directions. HASWELL'S PLAN would fail to tap the Memphis - New Orleans market. Memphis, as a population center and potential market is 4 times the size of the metropolitan Jackson population. HASWELL'S PLAN for passenger service down "the Main Line of Mid-America" can be thusly improved upon from both service and fiscal standpoints.
Richard Andrew Johnson, 930 University Street, Memphis, Tennessee 38107.

NORTHWEST RAIL IMAGES is discontinuing several of its duplicate color slide sets of Canadian subjects. If you would like views of passenger-carrying trains on 10 Canadian railways, send 35¢ promptly for a sample slide and list of all Canadian U.S. and Mexican slide sets. NRI, 4891 Donald Street, Eugene, Oregon 97405.

RAIL FANTRIPS

May 25-29: Redball Express 1978. Nonstop sleeper on scheduled CV and CN freights. Incl. Burlington VT & Massena NY. Round trip from NYC. Info: George A. Pins, 350 Fifth Avenue, Suite 6104, New York NY 10001.

Jul 8-9: RAILFAIR '78, Denver. Many exhibitors: railroads, Amtrak, collectors, publishers, etc. RR photo contest, movies, door prizes (RGZ tickets). SASE for info to: NRHS, Intermountain Chapter, Box 5181, Denver CO 80217.

One Fantrips listing is free. Rail Travel News, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads $1.25 per square inch. Rail Travel News, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

THE HASWELL PLAN (RTN Occasional Paper No. 1) is still available. Size 8½x6½, 44 pages. Complete text and maps of original Haswell plan for Amtrak.

CONTENTS: The Haswell Plan by Anthony Haswell. Introduction by James Russell. Analysis of Haswell Plan by Robert Glover. Defense of the MONTREALER by Joseph MacDonald. Table of Amtrak route data by Joseph MacDonald.

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